

Message Text

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VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL; LONDON FOR MR. WEISS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, GW, MCAP

SUBJECT: MBFR AND BUNDESWEHR FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL:
DEFENSE MINISTRY VIEWS

1. DURING NOV 13 VISIT BY PM DIRECTOR WEISS, DEFENSE
MINISTRY ASSISTANT SECRETARY WIECK SAID ONE KEY QUESTION
CONCERNING SOVIET APPROACH TO MBFR IS WHETHER MOSCOW
IS PREPARED TO TREAT INDIGENOUS FORCES IN TERMS OF
ARMS CONTROL RATHER THAN DISARMAMENT. WIECK AND
ADMIRAL STEINHAUS TOLD WEISS AND EMBOFF THAT DEFENSE
MINISTRY WILL ARGUE STRONGLY FOR ARMS CONTROL APPROACH,
PARTICULARLY GIVEN IMMINENT BUNDESWEHR STRUCTURE
REFORM PROPOSALS. DEFENSE MINISTRY IS THEREFORE DIS-
APPOINTED WITH PROPOSAL IN INITIAL SOVIET MBFR DRAFT
THAT U.S. AND SOVIET FORCES BE WITHDRAWN WHILE
INDIGENOUS FORCES ARE DISMANTLED AND EQUIPMENT OF
INDIGENOUS FORCES IS PERHAPS DESTROYED.

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2. WHILE WIECK SAID FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSALS ARE NOT DEPENDENT ON MBFR INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT, HE THOUGHT THE TWO COULD MESH TOGETHER NICELY BOTH IN TERMS OF SUBSTANCE AND TIMING. ON TIMING, WIECK SAID GERMAN FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL WOULD CONSIDER FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSALS NOV 30 AND FRG CABINET PROBABLY WOULD TAKE DECISION ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

3. AS TO SUBSTANCE OF FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL, WIECK SAID SEVERAL OPTIONS REMAIN BUT BASIC IDEA WAS TO RAISE EXISTING 33 BUNDESWEHR BRIGADES TO GERMAN NATO COMMITMENT OF 36 BRIGADES WITH ALL BRIGADES HAVING REQUIRED ARMORED EQUIPMENT. TOTAL BUNDESWEHR FORCE STRENGTH WOULD REMAIN AT CURRENT 495,000, BUT A PORTION--WIECK DID NOT SAY WHAT PROPORTION--WOULD BE IN "ALERT (CADRE) STATUS" AND COULD BE CALLED UP BY DECISION OF DEFENSE MINISTER, WITHOUT MOBILIZATION ORDER, WITHIN 24-72 HOURS. THESE FORCES ON ALERT STATUS WOULD BE TRAINED NATO CATEGORY A FORCES; ALERT STATUS WOULD NOT BE RELATED TO SUDDEN DANGER. STEINHAUS TOLD EMBOFF IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION THAT EARLIER IDEA TO CADRE SPECIFIC BRIGADES HAD BEEN DROPPED; WHILE CERTAIN OPTIONS REMAINED OPEN CONCERNING EXACT FORCES TO BE PLACED ON CADRE STATUS, STEINHAUS SAID THEY WOULD BE SELECTED IN A WAY TO ASSURE NO REDUCTION IN COMBAT CAPABILITY. COMMENT. FOR A DIFFERENT VIEW OF THESE MATTERS, SEE SEPTTEL COVERING COMMENTS OF DISARMAMENT COMMISSIONER ROTH. END COMMENT.

4. IN WIECK'S VIEW, SHOULD IT PROVE TO BE FEASIBLE, BUNDESWEHR FORCES AFFECTED BY MBFR ARMS CONTROL MEASURES COULD BE DEALT WITH IN CONTEXT OF "ALERT STATUS" CONTAINED IN FRG FORCE STRUCTURE REFORM PROPOSALS. THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, SHOULD SOVIETS INSIST ON DISARMAMENT/DISBANDMENT OF BUNDESWEHR FORCES IN MBFR.

5. WEISS SAID HE WISHED TO LIMIT INITIAL REACTION BY EMPHASIZING THAT INJECTION OF INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUC-

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TION ELEMENT INTO MBFR AT TOO EARLY A POINT COULD HAVE NEGATIVE OVERALL EFFECT ON AMERICAN CONGRESSIONAL OPINION WHICH SAW MBFR ALSO IN TERMS OF ALLIED BURDEN SHARING. WIECK AND STEINHAUS EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING FOR THIS CONSIDERATION, AND EMPHASIZED THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF BUNDESWEHR FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL WOULD BE CARRIED OUT OVER FIVE YEAR PERIOD, STARTING IN 1976, THUS MAKING FEASIBLE INTERMESHING OF MBFR II AGREEMENT

AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FORCE STRUCTURE REFORMS IN
GERMANY.
HILLENBRAND

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